

THE EMBODIMENTS OF THE INVENTION IN WHICH AN EXCLUSIVE PROPERTY OR PRIVILEGE IS CLAIMED ARE DEFINED AS FOLLOWS:

1. A composite file folder comprising a front panel, a back panel and a labeling tab along one edge of said back panel with said back panel and front panel being integral along one edge with a fold axis between said panels, said folder having a paper substrate support layer with a reinforcing film adhered to exterior surfaces of said front and back panels across said fold axis and applied either side of labeling tab, said reinforcing film being a multi-layer breathable film having a matte finish outer surface consisting of a cellulosic base material with an underlying adhesive layer adhered to said folder, said reinforcing film covering at least 50% of an outside surface of said file folder.
2. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film has printed indicia on the matte finish outer surface.
3. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 2 wherein said printed indicia is strongly bonded or adhered to said matte finish outer surface.
4. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film is clear and said paper stock includes printing on the surface thereof visible through said reinforcing film.
5. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film covers at least 75% of the outside surface of said file folder.
6. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 4 wherein said paper stock includes a coded area on said front and back panels which has been colour printed to provide colour coding of said file folder.

7. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 6 wherein said coded area is covered by said reinforcing film and visible therethrough.
8. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said paper stock has a thickness in the range of 10 to 16 thousandths of an inch and said reinforcing film has a thickness of less than .6 mils.
9. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said reinforcing film is secured to generally cover both the inside and outside surfaces of said front panel and said back panel.
10. A composite file folder as claimed in claim 1 wherein said file folder has two labeling tabs and said reinforcing film covers both sides of each labeling tab.
11. A method of manufacturing file folders comprising moving an elongate paper substrate past a laminating station, providing at said laminating station a reinforcing film having a matte finish recording surface and an underlying thermal adhesive layer, heating said reinforcing film to activate said thermal adhesive layer, aligning said reinforcing film such that at least one edge of said film overlies one edge of said paper substrate, securing said multi-layer reinforcing film to said paper substrate such that said reinforcing generally extends across at least 50% of the width of said paper substrate, said reinforcing film being secured to said paper substrate by applying pressure to said recording surface forcing said thermal adhesive layer into intimate contact with said paper substrate, folding and adhering said paper substrate to form a reinforced edge with said matte finish recording surface located about said reinforced edge, die cutting said reinforced edge to form a series of labeling tabs, cutting said substrate across

the width thereof to form discrete file folders, and folding said discrete file folders about a hinge line to form front and back panels with said labeling tabs on side edges of said back panels and said reinforcing film to the exterior of said panels and across said hinge line.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said reinforcing film is slightly less than the width of said paper substrate and said reinforcing film is maintained in alignment with said paper substrate to be within the width thereof.

13. A method as claimed in claim 12 wherein said method includes printing on said paper prior to said laminating station indicia or markings intended to assist in use of the file folder and wherein said reinforcing film is generally transparent and applied over said indicia or markings.

14. A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein said method includes printing on said reinforcing film after application of the reinforcing film to said paper substrate.

15. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein said recording surface of said reinforcing film is of a cellulose base material.

16. A method as claimed in claim 11 for manufacturing file folders of different colours comprising maintaining a series of reinforcing films of different colours, selecting the coloured reinforcing film to be applied and thereafter applying said reinforcing film.

17. A file folder comprising a body of paper stock and an exterior film substrate secured to said paper stock,

said file folder having a front face and a rear face attached by a fold line, said front face being of a shorter length to define at one edge of said folder perpendicular to the fold line a labeling tab, said film substrate also being secured to cover the exterior surface of said file folder and covering both sides of said labeling tab; said film substrate comprising a underlying polypropylene layer and an overlying polyethylene layer wherein said polypropylene layer has been thermally activated and secured to said paper stock, said polyethylene layer having an treated surface finish which varies the depth of said polyethylene layer, said treated surface finish having superior properties with respect to receiving and retaining ink from ball point pens or lead from pencils relative to a polyethylene film having a smooth surface.

18. A file folder as claimed in claim 17 wherein said treated surface finish has a host of recesses which having superior properties in retaining the ink or lead.

19. A file folder as claimed in claim 17 wherein said treated surface finish is a matte surface finish.

20. A file folder as claimed in claim 17 wherein said film substrate is at least translucent and said paper stock has printing thereon visible through said film substrate.

21. A file folder as claimed in claim 20 wherein said printing on said paper stock defines general information and categories of information to be used in providing summary information with respect to contents of the file folder, and wherein said summary information is manually written or printed on the surface of the film substrate.

22. A file folder as claimed in claim 21 wherein said surface finish retains the ink from ball point pens or

lead from pencils in a manner to oppose removal during normal use of the file folder while allowing removal using a suitable eraser.

23. A file folder as claimed in claim 22 wherein said suitable eraser is a rubber eraser.

24. A file folder as claimed in claim 18 wherein said film substrate is wrapped around the edge of said labeling tab and said recessed surface assists in reducing stress caused by wrapping of said film substrate about said edge of said labeling tab.

25. A file folder as claimed in claim 24 including a series of labels adhesively applied to said labeling tab and about the edge thereof, said recessed surface improving retention of said adhesively secured labels due to the cooperation with the recessed surface.

26. A file folder as claimed in claim 25 wherein adhesive applied labels secured to said labeling tab are manually removable without damage to said file folder.

27. A file folder as claimed in claim 26 wherein said file folder has labels applied to said labeling tab and having summary information manually written or printed on said film substrate is reconditionable for use in a second application by manual removal of said labels and manually erasing said summary information from said film substrate.

28. A file substrate as claimed in claim 17 wherein said paper stock is a thickness of 14 thousandths of an inch.

29. A file folder as claimed in claim 27 wherein said file folder is a government, medical or insurance file folder.

30. A file folder as claimed in claim 27 wherein said file folder is specific for financial, manufacturing or resource industries.

31. A recyclable file folder comprising a paper stock substrate folded to form a front panel, a back panel and a labeling tab along one edge of said back panel, said file folder further including a cellulos based reinforcing film adhered to both a front and rear side of said labeling tab and extending over at least a border region on an exterior surface of said back panel.

32. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 wherein said cellulos based reinforcing film is adhered to said paper substrate by a water based adhesive.

33. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 or 32 wherein said reinforcing film has a matte exterior finish.

34. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 33 including a series of discrete labels adhered to said labeling tab, each discrete label including an outer cellulos based film layer.

35. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 34 wherein each discrete label includes water based adhesive layer securing the label to the reinforcing film.

36. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 wherein said reinforcing film has an exterior textured surface providing improved adhesion with water based adhesives and improved adhesion with cooperating inks.

37. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 36 wherein said reinforcing film extends over and generally

covers the exterior surfaces of said front and back panels.

38. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 37 wherein said reinforcing film includes printed indicia on the surface of the reinforcing film for assisting a user in manually recording information on said reinforcing film.

39. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 38 wherein reinforcing film provides an erasable surface for conventional ink and pencil markings.

40. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 31 wherein said reinforcing film covers exterior surfaces of said front and back panels of said file folder.

41. A recyclable file folder as claimed in claim 40 wherein said reinforcing film has an exterior matte finish and provides a receptor surface for receiving adhesive labels thereon and a manual recording surface for receiving ink or pencil markings while allowing manual erasing thereof.